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United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process established by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/33 in order to facilitate the annual review by the Assembly of developments in ocean affairs
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Proposal by Norway on Global Resource Information Database (GRID)

1. Norway proposes that the following provision be included in the General Assembly resolution on oceans and the law of the sea at its fifty-seventh session:

> "*Calls upon* United Nations Environment Programme, working within its GRID system for data and information management, to host and develop a centre for research data from the outer continental margin intended to serve the needs of coastal States, and in particular developing countries and small island developing States, in their compliance with article 76 of the Convention or in any other utilization of such data in State interest"

2. This proposal was described in sect. B of the Norwegian paper submitted to the second meeting of the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process entitled "Marine science and the development and transfer of marine technology, including capacity-building" (A/AC.259/4). The proposal, which relates specifically to marine scientific research and mapping of the outer limits of the continental shelf, i.e. article 76 of UNCLOS, was discussed during the deliberations on oceans and the law of the sea at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

3. A major challenge for a State with limited resources may be to keep track of all research activity and the associated data acquired on its continental shelf through time. A second challenge is to find a place to store the copies of all the research data and information that according to articles 248 and 249 of UNCLOS are to be made available to the State. With the particular needs of developing countries in mind, we should seek to establish an infrastructure for storage and easy retrieval, and for keeping track of appropriate data sets that are still being processed by the research institution. This infrastructure should be established under a politically and nationally neutral organization to ensure integrity. At the same time it must have access to the human expertise and facilities, including computer and communication equipment, to handle these types of data. Within the framework of the United

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Nations, the Global Resource Information Database (GRID) system of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) may be a suitable candidate to host and develop a centre for research data from the outer continental margin intended to serve the needs of coastal States, and developing countries in particular.

4. The GRID system is a global network of environmental data centres facilitating the generation and dissemination of key environmental geo-referenced and statistical data sets and information products, focusing on environmental issues and natural resources. GRID centres typically have the ability, expertise and specialized information technology to prepare, analyse and present environmental and resource data and information.